
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development

BUSINESS PLAN 2006-09

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

The business plan for the three years commencing April 1, 2006 was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Government Accountability Act* and the government's accounting policies. All of the government's policy decisions as of February 23, 2006 with material economic or fiscal implications of which I am aware have been considered in preparing the business plan.

The Ministry's priorities outlined in the business plan were developed in the context of the government's business and fiscal plans. I am committed to achieving the planned results laid out in this business plan.

Pearl Calahasen, *Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development*
Date XX, 2006

THE MINISTRY

The Ministry is comprised of the following:

- the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, which consists of First Nation and Métis Relations, Land and Resource Issues, and Strategic Services;
- the Northern Alberta Development Council, a council of northerners, reporting through an MLA Chair to the Minister; and
- the Métis Settlements Appeal Tribunal, a quasi-judicial body, established by the *Métis Settlements Act*, to resolve disputes pertaining to land, membership and surface rights.

VISION

An Alberta that includes the full participation of self-reliant Aboriginal and northern Albertans in the province's opportunities and prosperity.

MISSION

Through collaboration with other ministries, Aboriginal governments and organizations, industry and other partners, enhance Aboriginal well-being and self-reliance, clarify government and Aboriginal roles and responsibilities, and advance the economic and social development of northern Alberta.

LINK TO THE GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development is committed to the Government of Alberta's Strategic Business Plan's vision, which includes an Alberta where "Aboriginal Albertans have achieved a socioeconomic status equivalent to that of other Albertans."

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development supports Government of Alberta Business Plan Goal 7 - *The well-being and self-reliance of Aboriginal communities and people will be improved.* The Ministry contributes to the following strategic opportunity of the government's 20-year strategic business plan: *Making Alberta the Best Place to Live, Work and Visit.* The Ministry supports the goal and contributes to the strategic opportunity by building on the strength and vitality of Aboriginal and northern communities, and enhancing their social and economic well-being.

SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

1. **Aboriginal participation in the economy.** Aboriginal youth are the fastest growing segment of the Alberta labour force at the same time that industry is facing skilled labour shortages. It is critical to close the gap in education both on-and off-reserve, through enhanced public and post-secondary education and innovative training solutions. With the support of industry and government, Aboriginal youth could fill positions in trades, administrative and professional careers. Enhanced education, training, and business development opportunities will result in self-reliant people and strengthened communities, which are ready and willing to take advantage of economic opportunities.
2. **First Nation relations.** Respectful relations are based on understanding the role of the Treaties and the responsibility of the Crown to First Nations. In recent years there has been a tremendous increase in interest among First Nation governments to work with the Government of Alberta. This creates opportunities for the development of new government-to-government partnerships including initiatives to increase First Nations participation in the economy and initiatives to improve the effectiveness of programs and services for First Nations people. Improved relationships with First Nations will also facilitate economic partnerships between government, First Nations and industry.
3. **Métis Settlements.** Métis Settlements are unique land-based governments that exist only in Alberta. Statutory payments made under the *Métis Settlements Accord Implementation Act*, which have contributed to the costs of local programs, services and infrastructure on the eight Métis Settlements, will conclude in March 2007. While the Settlements have made significant progress toward greater self-reliance, consideration of strategies to continue that progress is required. The Ministry will work with the Métis Settlements General Council to examine potential approaches to further enhance governance and self-reliance.

4. **Métis relations.** Alberta has responded proactively and collaboratively to court decisions which have found that Métis people, in certain circumstances, have constitutionally protected rights, including the right to harvest wildlife. Discussions regarding the renewal of the Alberta/Métis Nation of Alberta Association Framework Agreement provide an opportunity to explore new strategies to enhance the participation of Métis people in the economy and to address other social issues.
5. **Land management and resource development.** Alberta's consultation policy regarding the management and development of public lands commits the Crown to consult on matters pertaining to Aboriginal and Treaty rights. Coordination of land and resource management is critical to maintaining Alberta's position within the global economy. An appropriately resourced consultation policy will improve decision-making by balancing interests and applying leading practices. Implementation of this policy through the development, with other ministries, First Nations and industry, of operational guidelines, will promote certainty for all parties. The timely completion of traditional use studies and the incorporation of traditional environmental knowledge are crucial elements to successful implementation.
6. **First Nations governance and regulatory frameworks.** The Government of Alberta's *Aboriginal Policy Framework* recognizes in principle the inherent right of self-government and commits Alberta to participate in the development of self-government agreements, if invited to do so by the federal government and First Nations. The negotiation and implementation of self-government agreements offers an opportunity to re-empower First Nations communities and resolve long-standing service delivery and jurisdictional issues, including efforts currently underway to develop mechanisms to remove barriers to economic activity on First Nations reserves. There are significant potential implications for Alberta, and the Ministry is taking the lead in developing appropriate frameworks for, and coordinating provincial participation in, discussions regarding First Nations governance and regulatory frameworks.
7. **Clarify federal, provincial and Aboriginal roles and responsibilities.** Jurisdictional gaps, uncertainty and unclear roles and responsibilities continue to impact the delivery of services to Aboriginal people, especially across reserve boundaries. Through increased collaboration across governments – including the proposed First Ministers' Meeting on Aboriginal Issues, the Alberta-Canada-Aboriginal Partnership Forum and the Alberta Chiefs' Fiscal Table – develop creative strategies and partnerships to overcome specific federal-provincial jurisdictional barriers.
8. **Advancing northern development.** Northern Alberta's abundant natural resources are the driving force behind the Alberta economy. Northern Alberta comprises 60 per cent of the province but contains less than ten per cent of the province's population. The Ministry will coordinate the development of strategies that recognize the north's unique needs and opportunities. Pan-northern transportation, infrastructure, housing and other social concerns must be addressed to realize the full potential of northern growth corridors benefiting the whole Alberta economy.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2006-09

Through the Ministry's review of external and internal challenges, the strategic priorities described below have been identified. These are in addition to the important ongoing core activities of the Ministry.

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| 1. Consultation - Using and Respecting the Land

Linkage: Goal 1 | Lead the development and implementation of provincial consultation processes to ensure that Aboriginal and Treaty rights and traditional use are respected in the management of Crown lands and resources. The involvement of Elders by their communities in gathering traditional knowledge is urgent, as that knowledge may soon be lost to future generations. |
| 2. Building Aboriginal Self-sufficiency

Linkage: Goal 1 | Lead the development of frameworks for provincial participation in discussions with the federal government and First Nations regarding self-government and the establishment of mechanisms to enable economic activity on reserves. |
| 3. Métis Settlements

Linkage: Goal 2 | In partnership with the Métis Settlements General Council, establish mechanisms to prepare for the end of current funding arrangements in 2007 and develop plans for continued progress toward effective governance in the future. |
| 4. First Nation Economic Participation

Linkage: Goal 1 | Work with First Nations, industry and provincial departments and encourage federal government participation to implement strategies and partnerships to increase First Nations economic participation. |
| 5. Métis Economic Participation

Linkage: Goal 1 | Work with the Métis Nation of Alberta, and the Métis Settlements General Council, provincial departments, other governments and stakeholders to facilitate the development of strategies to increase Métis economic participation. |
| 6. Northern Development

Linkage: Goal 3 | Coordinate Alberta policies and strategies to enhance sustained and innovative northern economic and social development. In partnership with municipal, provincial, territorial, national and international governments, develop complementary pan-northern strategies. |
| 7. Quality of Life Partnerships

Linkage: Goal 2 | Enhance the quality of life of First Nation and Métis people through the coordination and facilitation of cross-ministry partnerships with First Nation and Métis organizations to address early childhood development, family violence, public and post-secondary education, training to employment and healthy families. |

CORE BUSINESSES, GOALS, STRATEGIES & PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Core Business One: Aboriginal Governance, Economic Development and Consultation

GOAL ONE

1

Lead the management of significant Aboriginal issues requiring coordinated strategic response and partnerships

What it means In 2000, the Government of Alberta approved the *Aboriginal Policy Framework*. The Ministry leads implementation of the Framework through collaboration with other ministries and partners to identify and address barriers to improved socio-economic circumstances of Aboriginal people. The Ministry has identified several strategic priorities related to First Nations: the development of frameworks to guide provincial participation in discussions on self-government; the establishment of mechanisms to regulate economic activity on reserves; and the implementation of strategic initiatives and partnerships with industry to enhance participation in the economy. Working with the Métis Settlements General Council to examine potential strategies to further enhance the self-reliance of the eight Métis Settlements remains an important priority for the Ministry.

Strategies

- 1.1 Lead and coordinate participation of Alberta ministries, with First Nations, industry and other partners, to implement Alberta's consultation policy and the traditional use studies program to address land and resource issues.
- 1.2 Lead and coordinate the participation of Alberta ministries in discussions with First Nations and the federal government on self-government and on the establishment of mechanisms for the removal of barriers to economic activity on First Nations reserves.
- 1.3 Assist First Nations to complete traditional use studies, preserve and safeguard the information, and negotiate protocols with First Nations for the appropriate sharing of traditional use data.
- 1.4 Work with the Métis Settlements General Council to develop and implement strategies to enhance the capacity of Settlement governments to effectively provide local programs, services and infrastructure.
- 1.5 Work with the Métis Nation of Alberta Association and other Alberta ministries through the renewal of the Alberta/Métis Nation of Alberta Association Framework Agreement to develop strategic partnerships.
- 1.6 Lead and coordinate participation of Alberta ministries to develop and implement strategic partnerships with First Nations and industry to enhance First Nations participation in the economy.
- 1.7 Lead and coordinate cross-ministry initiatives to address the commitments under the Government of Alberta's *Aboriginal Policy Framework*.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (2004-05)	Target 2006-07	Target 2007-08	Target 2008-09
1.a Number of collaborative traditional use data sharing protocols negotiated with First Nation communities	0	27	37	47
1.b Number of First Nations with a single point of contact for consultation	23	25	27	30

Provide advice and specialized knowledge to assist other ministries, Aboriginal governments, communities, and industry to enhance Aboriginal participation in the social and economic life of Alberta

What it means The Ministry enhances provincial relations with Aboriginal people, including ongoing relations with First Nations, Métis Settlements and the Métis Nation of Alberta Association, and works with other Alberta ministries to ensure that Aboriginal issues are considered in developing and implementing government initiatives. The Ministry also works collaboratively with Aboriginal communities, other ministries, industry and other partners to proactively identify and resolve emerging and ongoing issues.

Strategies

- 2.1 Work with Alberta ministries, the federal government and First Nations toward timely resolution of land-related negotiations, including treaty land entitlement claims for which Alberta has an obligation under the *Natural Resources Transfer Agreement*.
- 2.2 Work with Alberta ministries, federal and municipal governments and Aboriginal organizations in Edmonton, Calgary and Lethbridge to identify and address urban Aboriginal issues.
- 2.3 Work with other ministries, industry and First Nations to develop economic partnership initiatives, including the enhancement of skills development and the promotion of Aboriginal tourism.
- 2.4 Work with Aboriginal organizations and provincial ministries to ensure that First Nation and Métis views are considered in the development of provincial policies, programs and initiatives.
- 2.5 Work with the federal government, other ministries and the Chiefs' Fiscal Table to clarify roles and responsibilities to address important Aboriginal issues.
- 2.6 Encourage and facilitate the participation of First Nation and Métis representatives on provincial agencies, boards and commissions.
- 2.7 Provide advice and specialized knowledge to other ministries, industry, municipal and other governments, and Aboriginal organizations, to address both emerging and on-going issues that impact the lives of Aboriginal people.
- 2.8 Build an inventory of industry, First Nation and Métis partnerships in Alberta.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (year)	Target 2006-07	Target 2007-08	Target 2008-09
2.a Progress on the negotiation and implementation of land claims and related agreements.				
Agreement in Principle	0	3	1	1
Final Agreement	8	3	4	3
Full-implementation	8	14	17	19
Total	16	20	22	23
	(2004-05)			
2.b Reduced the gap between Aboriginal and provincial unemployment rates.				
North American Indian	6.8	6	5.5	5
Métis	3.9	3.5	3	2.5
	(2004)			
2.c Increase the Aboriginal labour force participation rate.	71.2	72	72.5	73
	(2004)			

Core Business Two: Northern Development

GOAL THREE

3

Advance the development of Northern Alberta

What it means The Ministry focuses attention and awareness on northern Alberta's unique opportunities and challenges. Our partners include other ministries, municipal, federal and international governments, international organizations, industry, Aboriginal organizations, communities and other stakeholders. With our partners, the Ministry initiates and coordinates the development of policies and strategies to advance sustainable northern development. Priorities include: transportation, infrastructure networks, economic diversification (via value-added agriculture and forestry strategies, innovative use of technology, tourism), educational attainment, skill development, health services, community capacity and Aboriginal inclusion. The Ministry works with provincial and territorial partners through memoranda of understanding and other initiatives to advance northern development.

Strategies

- 3.1 Engage northern and Aboriginal communities, businesses, industry and other stakeholders to address northern socio-economic priorities, opportunities and challenges to support northern strategies and initiatives.
- 3.2 Partner with other jurisdictions, other ministries, northern and Aboriginal communities, business, and industry to promote northern opportunities and address challenges.
- 3.3 Promote awareness of the significance of northern development to all Albertans.
- 3.4 In partnership with northern communities, business, industry, learning providers and students, support initiatives to increase northern skill levels.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (2004-05)	Target 2006-07	Target 2007-08	Target 2008-09
3.a Partner satisfaction with Northern Alberta Development Council's contribution in advancing northern interests.*	8.2	8	8	8
3.b Bursary return rate	78%	76%	76%	76%

*Average rating on a scale from 1 to 10 (1=very dissatisfied; 10=very satisfied).

EXPENSE BY CORE BUSINESS

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable					
	2004-05 Actual	2005-06 Budget	2005-06 Forecast	2006-07 Estimates	2007-08 Target	2008-09 Target
Aboriginal Relations	33,325	36,831	36,825	41,794	28,218	28,218
Northern Development	2,100	2,104	2,104	2,184	2,184	2,184
MINISTRY EXPENSE	35,425	38,935	38,929	43,978	30,402	30,402

MINISTRY STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable					
	2004-05 Actual	2005-06 Budget	2005-06 Forecast	2006-07 Estimates	2007-08 Target	2008-09 Target
REVENUE						
Other Revenue	81	-	99	-	-	-
MINISTRY REVENUE	81	-	99	-	-	-
EXPENSE						
Program						
Aboriginal Affairs	17,596	21,903	21,897	26,776	27,286	27,286
Metis Settlements Appeal Tribunal	966	942	942	1,022	1,032	1,032
Northern Alberta Development Council	2,000	2,004	2,004	2,094	2,084	2,084
Metis Settlements Governance	4,871	4,086	4,086	4,086	-	-
Metis Settlements Legislation	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	-	-
Valuation Adjustments and Other Provisions	(8)	-	-	-	-	-
MINISTRY EXPENSE	35,425	38,935	38,929	43,978	30,402	30,402
Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Capital Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-
NET OPERATING RESULT	(35,344)	(38,935)	(38,830)	(43,978)	(30,402)	(30,402)

CONSOLIDATED NET OPERATING RESULT

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable					
	2004-05 Actual	2005-06 Budget	2005-06 Forecast	2006-07 Estimates	2007-08 Target	2008-09 Target
Ministry Revenue	81	-	99	-	-	-
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	-	-	-	-	-	-
Consolidated Revenue	81	-	99	-	-	-
Ministry Expense	35,425	38,935	38,929	43,978	30,402	30,402
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	-	-	-	-	-	-
Consolidated Expense	35,425	38,935	38,929	43,978	30,402	30,402
Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Capital Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-
CONSOLIDATED NET OPERATING RESULT	(35,344)	(38,935)	(38,830)	(43,978)	(30,402)	(30,402)